

IN THE CLAIMS

The status of each claim is listed below.

Claims 1-7: Canceled.

8. (Withdrawn) The RPLC2 strain deposited with the Collection Nationale de Cultures et de Microorganismes [National Collection of Cultures and of Microorganism] held at the Institute Pasteur under the number I-2270, dated July 28, 1999.

9. (Withdrawn) The use of at least one antibody directed against the spores derived from strains obtained either from mutant strains of *B. anthracis* carrying one or more mutations chosen from mutations in at least one gene encoding a protein responsible for a toxic effect, in *B. anthracis* lacking at least one of the pXO1 and pXO2 plasmids, for producing a medicinal product capable of inducing passive immunization.

10. (Withdrawn) A purified antigenic preparation, characterized in that it is derived from *B. anthracis* spores and comprises one or more of the exoantigens of respective molecular weights 15kDA, 30kDA, 55kDA, and greater than 200 kDA.

11. (Withdrawn) An antibody directed against the antigenic preparations as claimed in claim 10.

Claims 12-15: Canceled.

16. (New) An acellular immunogenic composition capable of inducing an immune response against *B. anthracis* infections, comprising:

an isolated protective antigen (PA) from *B. anthracis*, and

killed and purified spores obtained either from mutant strains of *B. anthracis* carrying one or more mutations selected from mutations in at least one gene encoding a protein responsible for a toxic effect selected from the group consisting of a lethal factor (LF) and an edematogenic factor (EF), in *B. anthracis*, or from mutant strains of *B. anthracis* lacking pXO2 plasmids,

combined at least with a pharmaceutically acceptable vehicle.

17. (New) The acellular immunogenic composition as claimed in claim 16, which induces the production of antibodies against *B. anthracis*.

18. (New) The acellular immunogenic composition as claimed in claim 16, which also comprises at least one detoxified exotoxin selected from the group consisting of a lethal factor (LF) and an edematogenic factor (EF), which have been detoxified.

19. (New) The acellular immunogenic composition as claimed in claim 16, wherein the spores are isolated from a strain of *B. anthracis* selected from the group consisting of the following strains: Sterne 7702, RPLC2 (Collection Nationale de Cultures et de Microorganismes [National Collection of Cultures and of Microorganisms] held by the Institut Pasteur under the number I-2270, dated July 28, 1999) and RP42 (Collection Nationale de Cultures et de Microorganismes held by the Institut Pasteur under the number I-2271, dated July 28, 1999).

20. (New) The immunogenic composition as claimed in claim 16, wherein said isolated protective antigen (PA) from *B. anthracis* is selected from the group consisting of the purified protective antigens derived from any wild-type or mutated Sterne strain of *B. anthracis*, and the recombinant produced protective antigens of *B. anthracis*.

21. (New) The immunogenic composition or vaccine composition as claimed in claim 20, wherein the protective antigen is isolated from the RP42 strain (Collection Nationale de Cultures et de Microorganismes [National Collection of Cultures and of Microorganism] held by the Institute Pasteur under the number I-2271, dated July 28, 1999).

22. (New) An acellular vaccine composition against *B. anthracis*, comprising:
an isolated protective antigen (PA) from *B. anthracis*, and
killed and purified spores obtained either from mutant strains of *B. anthracis* carrying one or more mutations selected from the group consisting of mutations in at least one gene encoding a protein responsible for a toxic effect selected from the group consisting of a lethal factor (LF) and an edematogenic factor (EF), in *B. anthracis*, or from mutant strains of *B. anthracis* lacking pXO2 plasmids,
combined at least with a pharmaceutically acceptable vehicle and with at least one adjuvant.

23. (New) The vaccine composition of claim 22, which further comprises at least one detoxified exotoxin selected from the group consisting of a lethal factor (LF) and an edematogenic factor (EF), which have been detoxified.

24. (New) The vaccine composition of claim 22, wherein the spores are isolated from a strain of *B. anthracis* selected from the group consisting of the following strains: Sterne 7702, RPLC2 (Collection Nationale de Cultures et de Microorganismes [National Collection of Cultures and of Microorganisms] held by the Institut Pasteur under the number I-2270, dated July 28, 1999) and RP42 (Collection Nationale de Cultures et de Microorganismes held by the Institut Pasteur under the number I-2271, dated July 28, 1999).

25. (New) The vaccine composition of claim 22, wherein the protective antigen (PA) from *B. anthracis* is selected from the group consisting of the purified protective antigens isolated from any wild- type or mutated Sterne strain of *B. anthracis*, and the recombinantly produced protective antigens of *B. anthracis*.

26. (New) The vaccine composition of claim 25, wherein the protective antigen is isolated from the RP42 strain (Collection Nationale de Cultures et de Microorganismes [National Collection of Cultures and of Microorganisms] held by the Institut Pasteur under the number I-2271, dated July 28, 1999).

27. (New) An acellular immunogenic composition capable of inducing an immune response against *B. anthracis* infections, comprising:
an isolated protective antigen (PA) from *B. anthracis*, and
killed spores obtained either from mutant strains of *B. anthracis* carrying one or more mutations selected from mutations in at least one gene encoding a protein responsible for a toxic effect selected from the group consisting of a lethal factor (LF) and an endematogenic factor (EF), in *B. anthracis*, or from mutant strains of *B. anthracis* lacking pXO2 plasmids, combined at least with a pharmaceutically acceptable vehicle.

28. (New) The immunogenic composition as claimed in claim 27, which also comprises at least one detoxified exotoxin selected from the group consisting of a lethal factor (LF) and an endematogenic factor (EF), which have been detoxified.

29. (New) The immunogenic composition as claimed in claim 27, wherein the spores are isolated from a strain of *B. anthracis* selected from the group consisting of the following strains: Sterne 7702, RPLC2 (Collection Nationale de Cultures et de Microorganismes [National Collection of Cultures and of Microorganisms] held by the Institut Pasteur under the number I-2270, dated July 28, 1999) and RP42 (Collection Nationale de Cultures et de Microorganismes held by the Institut Pasteur under the number I- 2271, dated July 28, 1999).

30. (New) The immunogenic composition as claimed in claim 27, wherein the protective antigen is selected from the group consisting of the purified protective antigens derived from any wild-type or mutated Sterne strain of *B. anthracis*, and the recombinant produced protective antigens of *B. anthracis*.

31. (New) The immunogenic composition or vaccine composition as claimed in claim 30, wherein the protective antigen is isolated from the RP42 strain (Collection Nationale de Cultures et de Microorganismes [National Collection of Cultures and of Microorganism] held by the Institute Pasteur under the number I-2271, dated July 28, 1999).

32. (New) An acellular vaccine composition against *B. anthracis*, comprising:
an isolated protective antigen (PA) from *B. anthracis*, and
killed spores obtained either from mutant strains of *B. anthracis* carrying one or more mutations selected from mutations in at least one gene encoding a protein responsible for a toxic effect selected from the group consisting of a lethal factor (LF) and an endematogenic factor (EF), in *B. anthracis*, or from mutant strains of *B. anthracis* lacking pXO2 plasmids, combined at least with a pharmaceutically acceptable vehicle.

33. (New) The vaccine composition as claimed in claim 32, wherein said vaccine composition further comprises at least one detoxified exotoxin selected from the group consisting of a lethal factor (LF) and an endematogenic factor (EF), which have been detoxified.

34. (New) The vaccine composition as claimed in claim 32, wherein the spores are isolated from a strain of *B. anthracis* selected from the group consisting of the following strains: Sterne 7702, RPLC2 (Collection Nationale de Cultures et de Microorganismes [National Collection of Cultures and of Microorganisms] held by the Institut Pasteur under the number I-2270, dated July 28, 1999) and RP42 (Collection Nationale de Cultures et de Microorganismes held by the Institut Pasteur under the number I- 2271, dated July 28, 1999).

35. (New) The vaccine composition as claimed in claim 32, wherein the protective antigen is selected from the group consisting of the purified protective antigens derived from any wild-type or mutated Sterne strain of *B. anthracis*, and the recombinant produced protective antigens of *B. anthracis*.

36. (New) The vaccine composition as claimed in claim 32, wherein the protective antigen is isolated from the RP42 strain (Collection Nationale de Cultures et de Microorganismes [National Collection of Cultures and of Microorganism] held by the Institute Pasteur under the number I-2271, dated July 28, 1999).

SUPPORT FOR THE AMENDMENTS

The specification has been amended to amend the description of figure 2 in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion and to insert the address of the depository.

Newly-added Claims 16-36 are supported by the specification at pages 4-19 and the original claims.

No new matter is believed to have been added to the present application by the amendment submitted above.